

U.S. Parent Application Serial No. 10/738,915  
Reply to Office Action dated March 31, 2005

**Remarks:**

Applicants have read and considered the Office Action dated March 31, 2005. In the Action, a Restriction Requirement was placed on the application. The Action stated that there were five groups which were patentably distinct species. They are:

Group I, a method of harvesting shown in Figure 4;  
Group II, a method of harvesting shown in Figure 5;  
Group III, a method of harvesting shown in Figure 6;  
Group IV, a method of harvesting shown in Figure 7; and  
Group V, a method of harvesting shown in Figure 8.

Applicants were required to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits.

Applicants hereby elect Group II, a method of harvesting shown in Figure 5, with traverse. Applicants assert that all of the claims are related to a method that is generally shown in Figure 5. All of the claims relate to a method of stripping leaves from a stem. Applicants assert that the claims are closely related and may be searched and examined together and that the claims are all related to subject matter in the same art unit. Applicants do not believe that the present invention includes five distinct inventions. Applicants have elected Group II with traverse and request that the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn.

Applicants believe that at least claims 1-5 and 13-18 read on Figure 5.

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A speedy and favorable action on the merits is hereby solicited. If the Examiner feels that a telephone interview may be helpful in this matter, please contact Applicant's representative at (612) 336-4728.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.

Dated: 5/2/05

By: 

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GAS/km